

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 05296 221130Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5598
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T BEIRUT 5296

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, MOPS, PBOR, LE, IS
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: ILMAC MEETING

REF: BEIRUT 5277

1. FONMIN BOUTROS LAST NIGHT CONFIRMED TO ME REPORT GIVEN TO DATT BY MAJOR ABDO REGARDING ILMAC MEETING PROPOSED FOR OCTOBER 25 ROSH HANIKRA. HE EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT AT ISRAELI REQUEST THAT LEBANESE DELEGATION TRAVEL TO SITE BY AUTO. HE SAID LEBANESE, HOWEVER, WERE NOT GOING TO LET THIS STAND IN WAY OF MEETING AND WOULD ARRANGE IT SOMEHOW.

2. AT ABOUT THIS POINT SAMI KHATIB, COMMANDER OF THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCE, JOINED CONVERSATION. HE HAS BEEN KEY MAN IN DISCUSSIONS WITH PALESTINIANS AND I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PALESTINIAN INTENTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION SHTAURA AGREEMENT. HE SAID THAT HE FEARED PALESTINIANS WERE TRYING TO TEMPORIZE AND TO
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DRAG OUT IMPLEMENTATION UNTIL SUCH TIME AS PROSPECTS FOR GENEVA BECAME CLEARER. IF THEY THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE NO GENEVA OR NO RESULTS, THEY WOULD TRY TO POSTPONE WITHDRAWAL. HE AND BOUTROS BOTH AGREED THAT THE ESSENTIAL WAS NOT TO GIVE THEM OR OTHER PARTIES (CHRISTIANS AND ISRAELIS) EXCUSES FOR DRAGGING FEET AND THAT PRESSURE SHOULD BE KEPT UP ON EVERYONE TO PROCEED WITH IMPLEMENTA-

TION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. BOUTROS SAID THAT CHAMOUN HAD GOTTEN LEBANESE FRONT, "EVEN PERHAPS INCLUDING FRANGIE", TO AGREE TO ENDORSE SHTAURA ACCORD AND TO WITHDRAWAL OF NON-RESIDENT CHRISTIAN FIGHTERS FROM THE SOUTH. HE HOPED TO HAVE CONFIRMATION PRIOR TO TUESDAY'S MEETING OF ILMAC.

4. MET WITH SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT KAMEL AL-ASSAD THIS MORNING (OCT. 22) AT HIS REQUEST TO DISCUSS SOUTH. HE SAID HE HAD TALKED TO ABU IYAD TWO DAYS BEFORE AND LATTER HAD ASSURED HIM OF PALESTINIAN SINCERITY AND DESIRE TO IMPLEMENT SHTAURA. ASSAD WAS INCLINED TO BELIEVE HIM BUT FEARED THAT ISRAELIS WOULD PUSH CHRISTIANS TO SOMEHOW INTERFERE WITH IMPLEMENTATION. HE FELT PRESENT ARGUMENT BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND LEBANESE OVER PHASED WITHDRAWAL WAS DETAIL WHICH COULD BE SETTLED WITHOUT TOO MUCH DIFFICULTY AS LONG AS ISRAELIS WERE NOT OBJECTING. I TOLD HIM IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION FOR ISRAELIS WAS THAT PALESTINIANS WITHDRAW BEFORE LEBANESE WENT INTO POSITIONS. I DID NOT THINK THEY WOULD WANT TO INTERFERE WITH THE WITHDRAWAL AND THE PHASING SEEMED TO BE PRIMARILY A QUESTION BETWEEN THE LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS.

5. COMMENT: ON REFLECTION I AM NOT SO SURE ABOUT
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MY LAST COMMENT TO ASSAD; THAT IS, WOULD ISRAEL ACQUIESCE IN WITHDRAWAL PHASED OVER, SAY, THREE WEEKS OR A MONTH? WOULD APPRECIATE TEL AVIV'S VIEWS THIS REGARD.
PARKER

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